

La Salle University

La Salle University Digital Commons

Explorer Café

Explorer Connection

9-2-2020

What Happens If We Abolish or Defund the Police?

Caitlin Taylor PhD

La Salle University, taylorc@lasalle.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/explorercafe>

Recommended Citation

Taylor, Caitlin PhD, "What Happens If We Abolish or Defund the Police?" (2020). *Explorer Café*. 100.
<https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/explorercafe/100>

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Explorer Connection at La Salle University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Explorer Café by an authorized administrator of La Salle University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact careyc@lasalle.edu.

What Happens If We Abolish or Defund the Police?

Caitlin J. Taylor, Ph.D.
Sociology & Criminal Justice
La Salle University
taylorc@lasalle.edu





Brain Warmup

What's something you think the police could do better?

Type your thoughts into the chat.

How Did We Get Here?

Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

Police don't create public safety

How Did We Get Here?

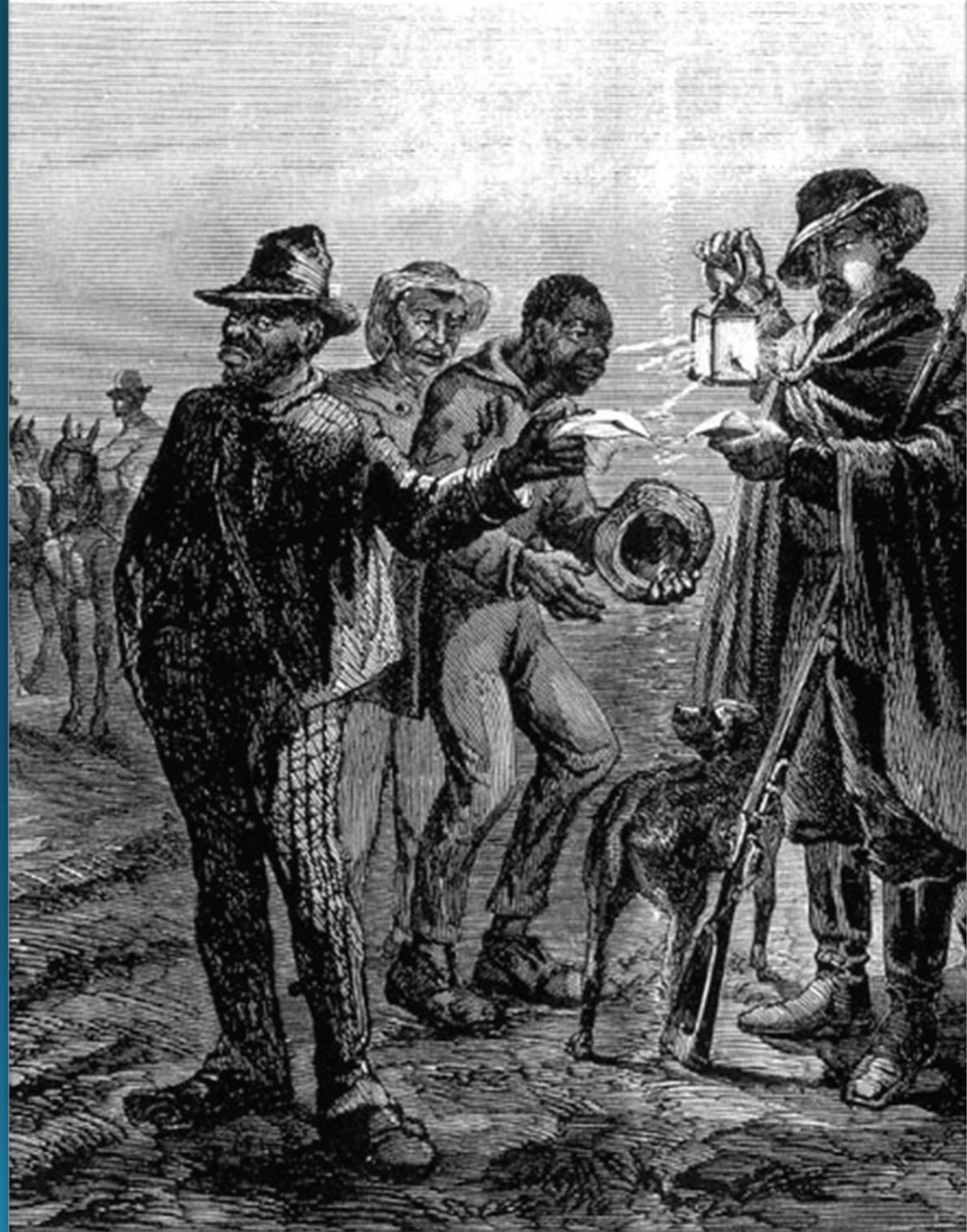
Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

Police don't create public safety

"There is not a single era in United States history in which the police were not a force of violence against black people. Policing in the South emerged from the slave patrols in the 1700 and 1800s that caught and returned runaway slaves. In the North, the first municipal police departments in the mid-1800s helped quash labor strikes and riots against the rich. Everywhere, they have suppressed marginalized populations to protect the status quo. So when you see a police officer pressing his knee into a black man's neck until he dies, that's the logical result of policing in America. When a police officer brutalizes a black person, he is doing what he sees as his job."

- Mariame Kaba



How Did We Get Here?

Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

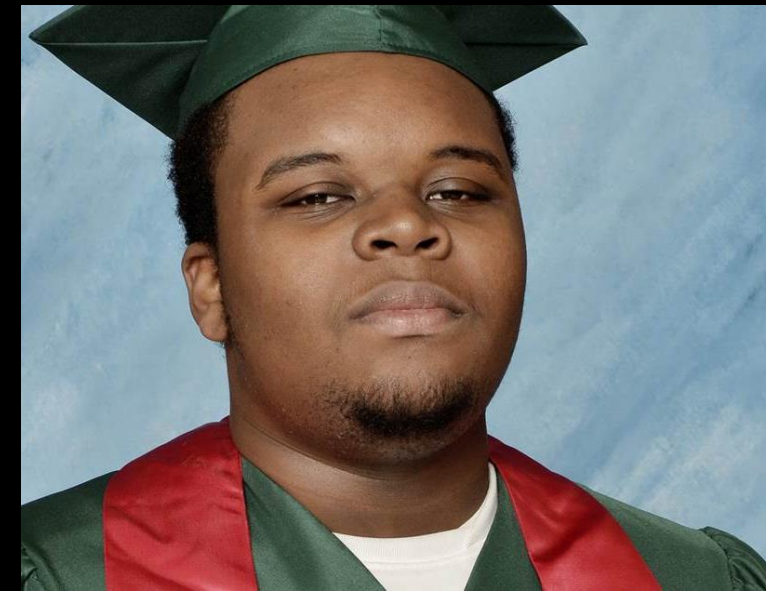
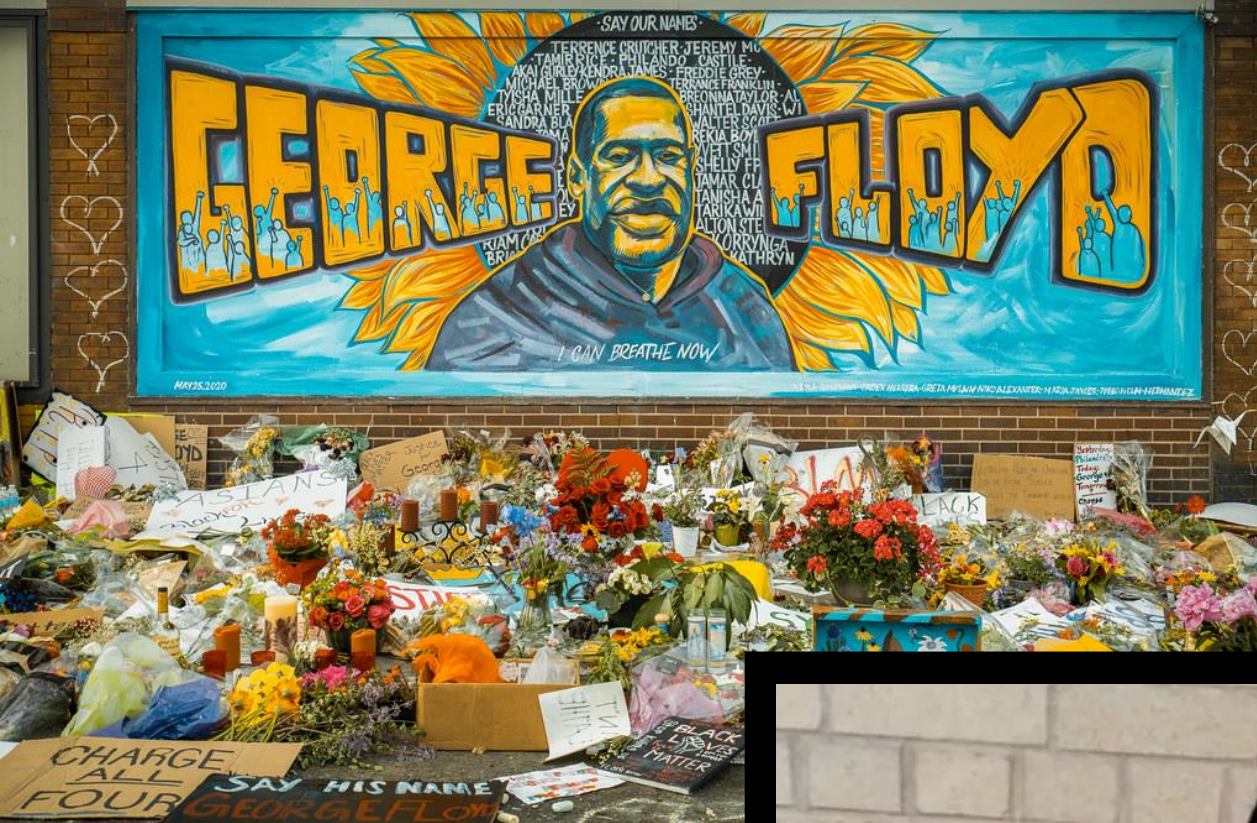
Police don't create public safety

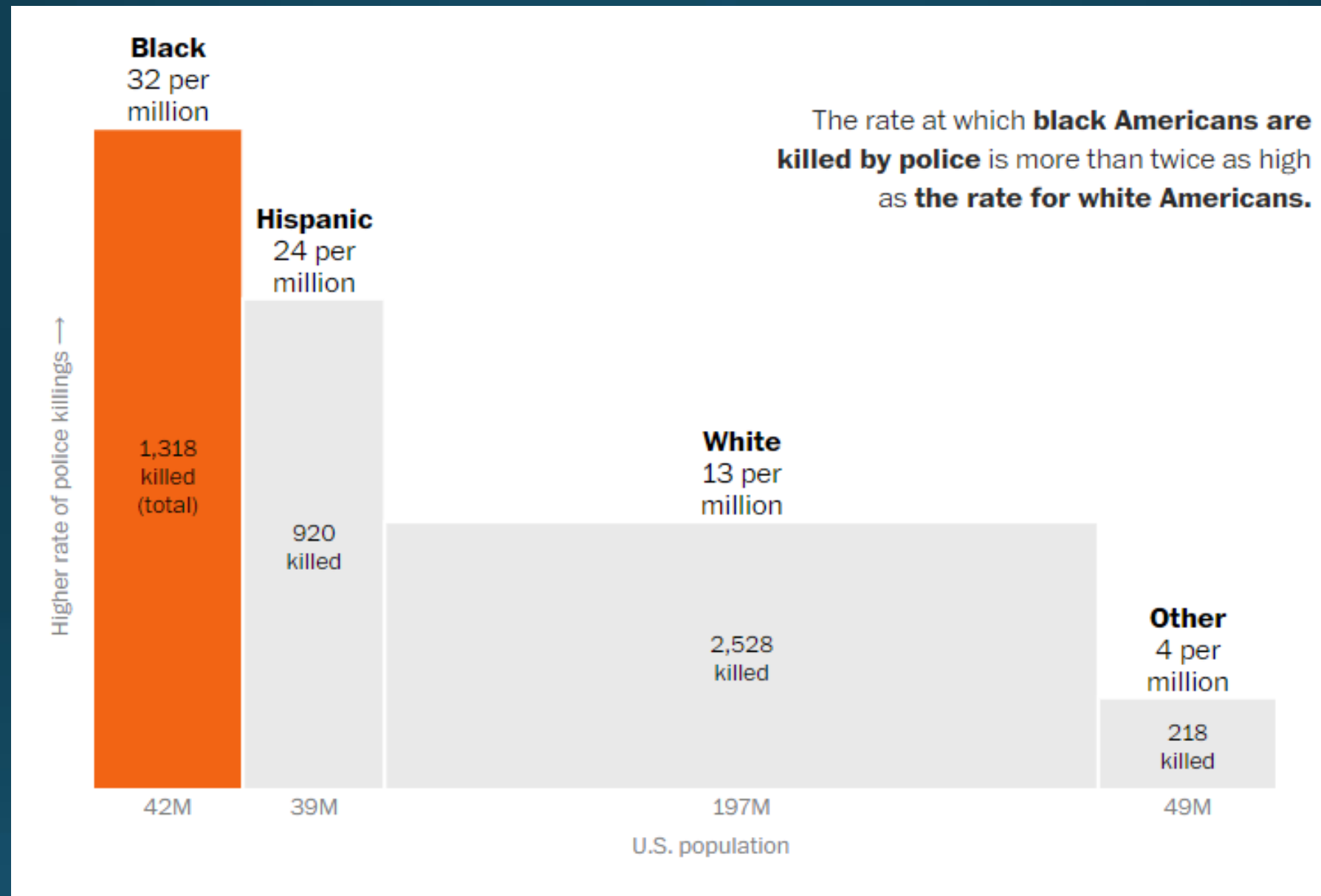
How Did We Get Here?

Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

Police don't create public safety





Source: The Washington Post

How Did We Get Here?

Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

Police don't create public safety

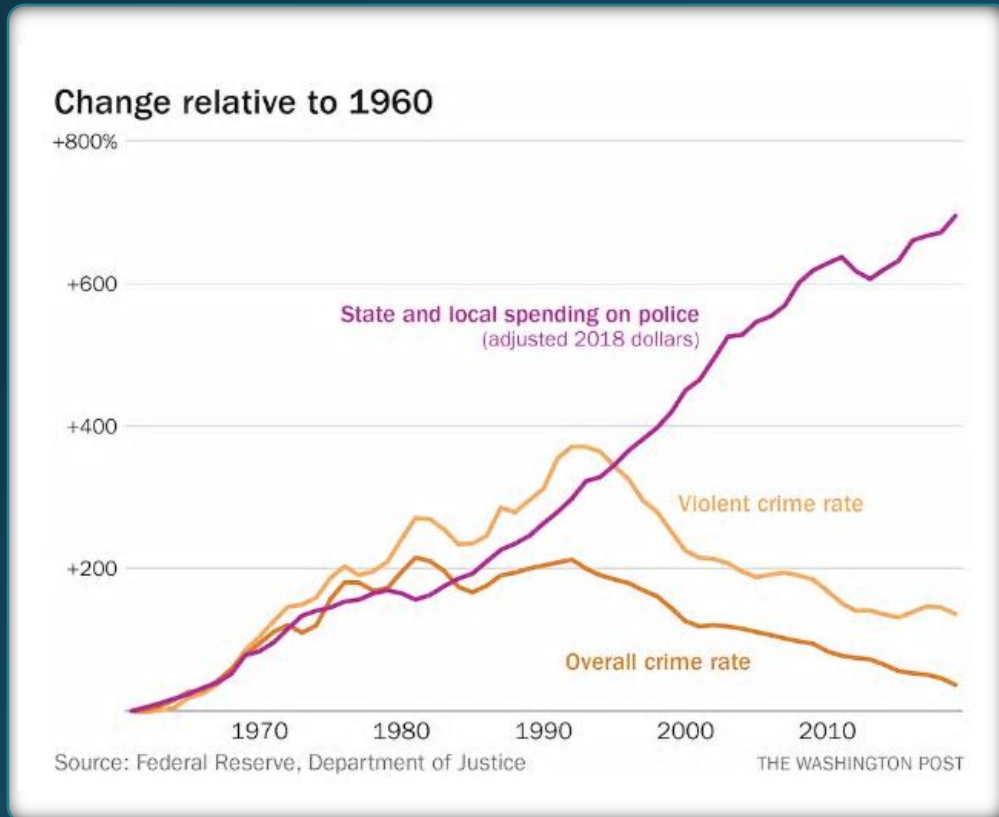
How Did We Get Here?

Racist history of policing

Recent police killings of unarmed Black people

Police don't create public safety

Police ≠ Safety



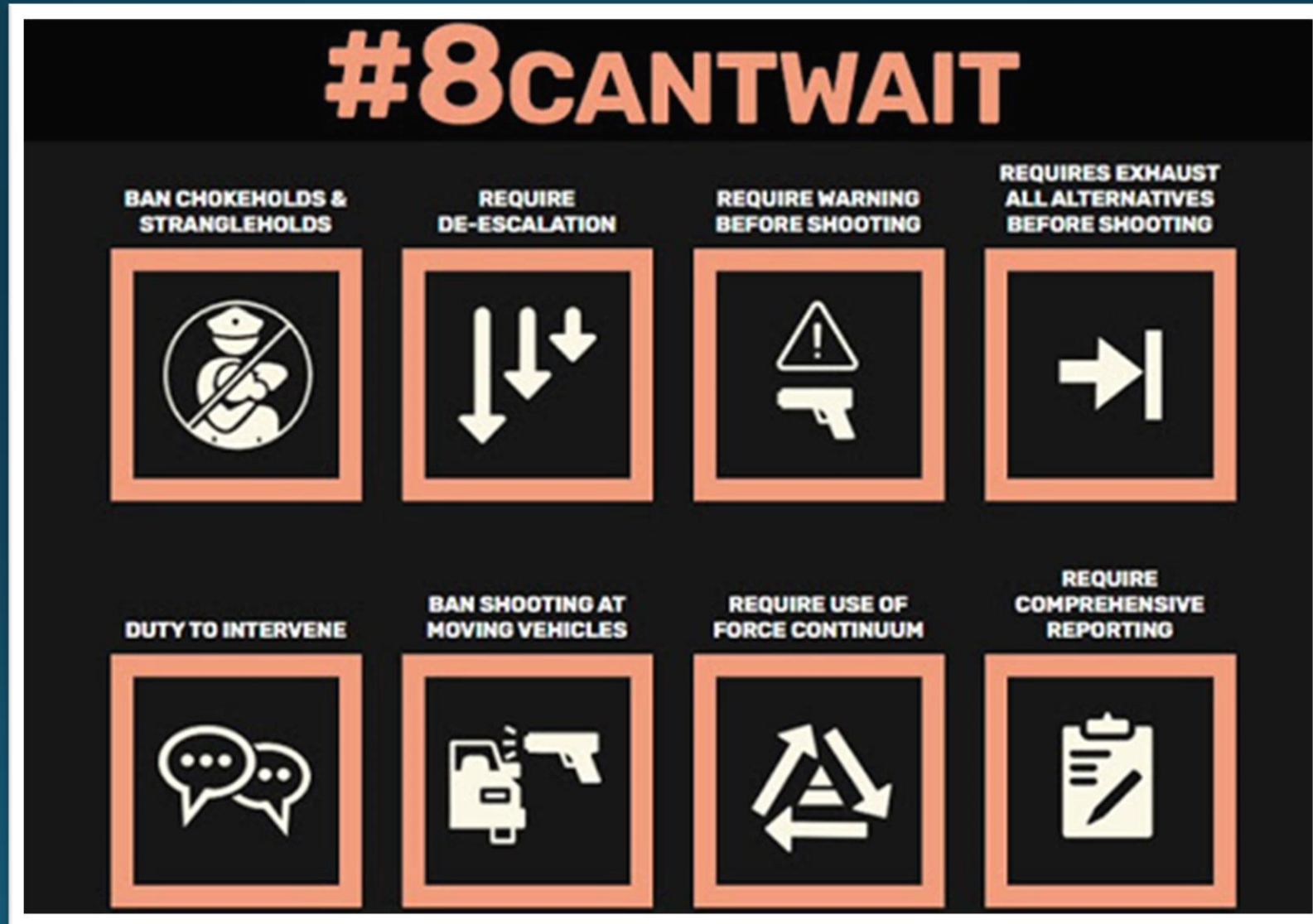
- Many serious offenses are never “cleared”
 - 38% murders
 - 67% rapes
 - 70% robberies
 - 47% aggravated assaults
 - 86% burglaries

So what can we do??



Nothing Reform
the police Defund
the police Abolish
the police

Reform the Police



Defund the Police

- Divest in police, invest in community services instead
- “[B]egin by changing policies or statutes so police officers never respond to certain kinds of emergencies, including ones that involve substance abuse, domestic violence, homelessness or mental health... So if someone calls 911 to report a drug overdose, **health care teams** rush to the scene; the police wouldn’t get involved. If a person calls 911 to complain about people who are homeless, **rapid response social workers** would provide them with housing support and other resources. **Conflict interrupters and restorative justice teams** could mediate situations where no one’s safety is being threatened.”
 - Philip V. McHarris and Thenjiwe McHarris

Abolish the Police

- Don't just divest from the police, but totally start over
- *"Bottoming out police budgets will not, on its own, create the resources necessary to build communities anew. But it would shift the balance away from the decades-long orientation on law and order toward treatment and care. The abolition of policing may seem farfetched to some, but, in effect, the racist batter of the police has already been baked. We cannot go back now and decide to take out this or that thing. The whole cake has to be discarded, starting with its most vile ingredient—the presumption of Black criminality and guilt. The reimagining of a just society has inevitably come into conflict with the racist barbarism of American police. We must begin again."*
- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

8 TO ABOLITION

**A WORLD WITHOUT PRISONS OR POLICE
WHERE WE CAN ALL BE SAFE.**

1. Defund Police
2. Demilitarize Communities
3. Remove Police From Schools
4. Free People From Jails And Prisons
5. Repeal Laws That Criminalize Survival
6. Invest In Community Self-Governance
7. Provide Safe Housing For Everyone
8. Invest In Care, Not Cops

ABOLITION CAN'T WAIT.

Breakout Rooms Discussion

The Set-Up

- Identify a *facilitator* – make sure everyone has time to talk
- Identify a *reporter* – someone who will share the top 2 or 3 most important points with larger group

The Tasks

- What are the key advantages and disadvantages of *defunding*?
- What are the key advantages and disadvantages of *abolition*?

Want to Keep this Going??

- Check out these organizations:
 - #8toabolition
 - Black Lives Matter
 - Decarcerate PA
 - Amistad Law Project
- Should We Abolish or Reform the Police?:
Two Local Leaders Share Their Insights
 - Thurs. Sept. 17 at 6pm
 - Kempis "Ghani" Songster & Jondhi Harrell